

Assessment of Student Learning
2016-17 Action Plan

Faculty Name: Jennifer Lovgren

Other Faculty Collaborators (if any): Jennifer Lovgren

Course/Program/Dept Name: COMM 1140: Interpersonal Communication

This action plan is for a:

Course	Program/Dept.
✓	

Area of student learning seeking to improve:

Course Competency: Apply communication strategies to create healthy interpersonal climates

Baseline data/information using to measure improvement:

Students will submit journal entries throughout the course of the semester. These journal entries require students to identify a personal relationship in which they want to make a change (specifically, in the communication that occurs within the relationship). These "focus on relationship" journal assignments will ask students to reflect on different aspects of their chosen relationship and apply course material as it makes sense for them. I'm going to use their first journal assignment, in which they describe their chosen relationship and the specific aspects they'd like to improve, as the baseline for my assessment.

Data Upload (optional):

Strategy for improvement:

My strategy is to offer regular opportunities for students to directly apply course material in the hopes that they realize how useful this information really is! Students will compare their first journal entry and last journal entry to make their own assessment of how interpersonal communication has improved (or changed in some way). It sounds simple, but if students are able to see (in their own writing) that communication in a personal relationship has improved due to application of course concepts, then I believe real learning has occurred and the course competency will be met (and not just for the purpose of a grade in the course, but for meaningful life-long learning).

RESULTS

Analysis of the effectiveness of the strategy:

Throughout the course of the semester, I asked students to reflect and respond on a relationship. Each reflection assignment required the student to apply specific course content to that relationship, in the hope that they might see their study of communication "in action." The final "FOR" assignment was more of a wrap-up in which students self-reported their understanding of course content. (See final FOR assignment attached). Of the 48 students responding, results are as follows; (On a scale of 1-5, with 1 = not confident and 5 = very confident in their understanding) Course Objectives: 1. Analyze the role of verbal and nonverbal behavior in interpersonal communication (Average, 4) 2. Employ listening strategies designed to enhance interpersonal relationships (Average, 3) 3. Recognize how emotions and the expression of them affect interpersonal relationships (Average, 4) 4. Apply communication strategies to create healthy interpersonal climates (Average, 4) Student Comments: This course has taught me a lot about myself and things I can work on to better my relationship with my husband. I have a long way to go, but have been encouraged by this course to keep working on the things I need to to make my relationship a happier and healthier one. I feel I can express my emotions and communicate more effectively than I was able to at the start because I have more perspective. Though I am not a "pro" yet I have come a long way since the start. Probably the biggest area I have grown this semester is recognizing how emotions and how they are expressed can affect relationships. People can say things and mean something completely different depending on how the person is using facial expressions and gestures. I have seen this in my relationship with my daughter as well as my relationships at work. It has helped me tremendously. I have been able to discern the motivations and intentions of others and not be so quick to judge. I give my understanding of this objective a rating of 5. These skills can span far beyond me and my girlfriend. I can use these skills to better my relationship with my older brothers, my coaches, my future professors/advisors, and bosses I may have. These skills are not just for "intimate" as in romantic; but "intimate" as in meaningful and beneficial to my health and well being. All of the course topics tied together to make me a more knowledgeable communicative partner and less likely to half-listen to others and blow off things because I don't think they are important. I learned a lot through this course and I am really glad I chose to take it. Summary: I think the scoring and comments reflect that students report confidence in their understanding of course content and positively commented on how they were able to make use of those new communication skills in personal relationships.

Data Upload (optional): [FOR_5.pdf](#)

Next Steps:

I continued the assignment and assessment over the summer semester. Results were very similar and students anecdotally expressed that they felt individual relationships were positively influenced by course content. I am going to continue with these assignments because I believe they are a good assessment of student learning and I enjoy seeing students make use of what they are learning. Of all reported scores, confidence in listening skills ranked the lowest. I believe I will focus future assessment efforts on addressing listening in interpersonal relationships.

Peer Consultation (optional):

I did briefly discuss the plan and results with other communication colleagues. Both were supportive of the idea and believed the assignment was a great way to get students to identify how they understood (and applied) the course content. If anything, the take-away was that both colleagues supported the assignment and assessment.

Focus on Relationship – Journal Entry #5

10 points

Please submit a 1-2 page paper as a Word (.docx) to the Assignments tab in Brightspace by Sunday @ 11:59 pm!

Goal: To reflect on aspects of an interpersonal relationship that could be improved with the application of course concepts/skills learned

Directions: Over the course of the semester, I have asked you to reflect on various aspects of an interpersonal relationship and do your best to apply course concepts to improve communication within that relationship.

As we end the semester, I would like you to do some comparing/contrasting. To what degree do you believe the communication in your relationship has changed (positively or negatively)? In what ways have you applied course content to make those changes?

Specifically, I would like you to “rate” the following course objectives and explain your rating with a brief example. On a scale of 1-5, with 1 = not confident and 5 = very confident, how would you rate your understanding of the following objectives?

Course Objectives:

1. Analyze the role of verbal and nonverbal behavior in interpersonal communication

Rating/Rationale:

2. Employ listening strategies designed to enhance interpersonal relationships

Rating/Rationale:

3. Recognize how emotions and the expression of them affect interpersonal relationships

Rating/Rationale:

Finally, I believe the creation of a healthy interpersonal climate is really a compilation of all things discussed this semester – verbal/nonverbal communication, listening, managing conflict, recognizing emotions, etc. To that end, to what degree do you believe you are able to do the following;

4. Apply communication strategies to create healthy interpersonal climates

Rating/Rationale: